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History of the Rock Island Argus.

October 18, 1851, was issued the first edition of the Rock Island Republican, which afterward became the Rock Island Argus. The latter name was adopted in 1855, and was made necessary by the forming of the Republican party. The newspaper could not well retain its old name after the new party came into existence, for it was allied with the Democratic cause.

Fred S. Nichols and John W. Dunham established the Republican. They came from St. Louis, bringing a small printing outfit with them. Both had had newspaper experience, having been associated together on the St. Louis Intelligencer. Dunham remained but six weeks, selling out to his partner and returning south. In November, 1852, Nichols sold a half interest to J. B. Danforth, whose connection with the paper was maintained practically all the time until 1869. In the spring of 1853 Mr. Danforth became sole proprietor. Three years later he sold an interest to Robert V. Shurley.

The Republican was the only Democratic newspaper in a radius of one hundred miles at the time it was established. It was started as a weekly, becoming a daily July 13, 1854. At that time there was no other daily nearer than Dubuque.

September 16, 1857, Pershing and Connelly purchased the interests not owned by Mr. Shurley. A week later Mr. Shurley sold his holdings to Milton Jones, who held an editorial position on the paper until 1881. Pershing and Connelly had been owners of the Rock Islander and they consolidated the two papers, the name becoming the Rock Islander and Argus. Two years later Mr. Danforth bought out Pershing and Connelly and the name was again changed to the Argus. Between July 18, 1859, and September 1, 1861, the Argus was published as a tri-weekly, returning to the daily field on the latter date.

In 1869 Robert F. McNeal bought out Mr. Danforth, parting with his interests the following year to J. S. Drake. In

1873 The Argus Company was incorporated with \$32,000 capital stock. In 1871 the Argus entered its first exclusive quarters, erected by the Buford heirs. In 1880 the paper was taken over by Richardson and Powers, who waged a brief struggle with adversity and in 1881 suspended publication. Then came J. W. Potter, publisher of the Freeport Bulletin, and bought the property for his son, J. W. Potter, Jr.

The first issue under the new management appeared August 2, 1882. In May, 1885, the elder Potter died, the son becoming sole owner. In 1888 the paper moved into the quarters at 1624 Second Avenue, which it now occupies, and which have been remodeled from time to time to meet the growing needs.

January 11, 1898, Mr. Potter died, and the J. W. Potter Publishing Company was then formed, with Mrs. J. W. Potter president. H. P. Simpson, who assumed editorial charge on the death of Mr. Potter, retains that position at present, being also vice-president of the corporation. J. J. VaVelle was business manager, being succeeded at his death in 1907 by F. J. Mueller, who still serves in that capacity, and is also secretary-treasurer of the corporation.

The Argus has kept pace with the improvements of the age in all its departments. It now has (in 1916) five linotype machines and a sixteen-page Duplex stereotype press and gives regular employment to forty men and women.

For the first few months of its existence the Daily Argus was an evening paper. Then from 1855 till 1861 it was a morning paper. In the latter year it changed back to an evening publication and has continued as such until the present. A weekly was published in addition to the daily until four years ago, when it was discontinued.